

Tonight, President Obama set forth a bold vision for this country. For the first two years of his Presidency, we have been cleaning up the mess that was left by the Bush Administration. It hasn't always been pretty, but every step of the way we've made clear, substantive and measurable progress. Now we are ready to move forward, and tonight the President provided us with a blueprint for the 21st century. A blueprint that will see America once again lead the world in the technologies of tomorrow by investing in the services and infrastructure of today: education, clean energy and high-speed rail. It is in these investments that we will find sensible long-term deficit reduction that will allow our economy to grow and build jobs. Much like the President, I believe that reducing our national debt and the size of our deficit is crucial to our national and economic security. The key to achieving a balanced budget and reducing our deficit is the development of a high growth economy. This will only happen when we are honest about what works and what does not. If we are serious about cutting the deficit, let's cut a bloated defense budget. Let's fully implement a health care law that will reduce the deficit by over a trillion dollars while getting health care to 35 million of America's uninsured. Let's finally tell the truth about the costs of providing the wealthiest 2% with billions of dollars of additional tax cuts. We cannot fix our deficit by cutting discretionary programs needed to promote our economy and provide for our citizens. We cannot afford an endless war in Afghanistan. We must make critical investments in our nation's economic future: our small businesses and entrepreneurs, our children, our students, our future workers.